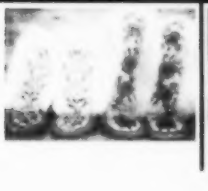


ARTISTS' NEWSLINE



December, 2004

A GNWT Newsletter for the Northwest Territories Arts Community

UPCOMING EVENTS

Craft Night Mondays

Looking for something to do throughout the cold winter months? Join The Artists of the South Slave Society (TASSS) for Craft Night Mondays. Each week TASSS will teach you how to make a craft. Crafts nights in December will include how to make: Wool felt tree ornaments, Christmas wreaths, and fresh floral Christmas arrangements.

Where: Fort Smith, NT
When: December, 2004
Ph: (867) 872-3123
Visit their website: www.tasss.ca

Festival of Trees Contest

Show Fort Smith your Christmas spirit and decorate a tree that depicts a theme based on your organization or business.

Where: The Northern Life Museum
Fort Smith, NT
When: December 6 – 31, 2004
Ph: (867) 872-2859



Versus Ivan

For Ivan...everyday is not today! A full length dark comedy about routine, control and the acceptance of change.

Where: The Northern Arts and Cultural Centre
Yellowknife, NT
When: December 10—11 and 16—18, 2004
Visit their website: www.versusivan.com

Banff Festival of Mountain Film

View a selection of the world's best mountain films and videos when the tour comes to Yellowknife. Presented by Eagle Creek Travel Gear and the National Geographic Society and locally hosted by Overlander Sports and Blachford Lake Lodge.

Where: The Northern Arts and Cultural Centre
Yellowknife, NT
When: January 21—22, 2005
Ph: (867) 873-2474
Visit their website: www.banffcentre.ab.ca/cmc/

Cabin Fever Music Festival and Art Show

Winter getting you down? Need some excitement in your life? Come out for this third annual music festival that will showcase over 15 local bands and musicians. This event is organized by the Recording Artists Association of the NWT.

Where: Sam's Monkey Tree
Yellowknife, NT
When: February 20, 2005
Ph: (867) 873-6409
E-mail: borealis@tamarack.nt.ca



Kamba Winter Carnival

Celebrate the end of winter with nothing better than traditional events which include a dog derby, talent show, dances and bingos.

Where: Hay River, NT
When: February 24—27, 2005
Ph: (867) 874-6701

WHAT'S NEW?



The Northwest Territories Arts Strategy, "**A Holistic Approach to a Vibrant Arts Sector**", was released on November 1, 2004 by Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) Minister Charles Dent and Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development (RWED) Minister Brendan Bell.

The Strategy addresses the effectiveness of current programs supporting the arts and identifies an action plan to provide for emerging needs. This Strategy will move us towards achieving our vision,

"To secure the stability of a vibrant Arts sector that is integral to the economic, social, and cultural fabric of the NWT, and contributes positively to the quality of life within the NWT."

This strategy represents the Government of the Northwest Territories' recognition of the important role that arts and fine crafts plays in both our society and our economy, and demonstrates our commitment to take action to address identified issues and opportunities in this sector.

The Arts Strategy, "A Holistic Approach to a Vibrant Arts Sector" is available on the Government of the Northwest Territories website at: www.gov.nt.ca/research/publications/index.html.

To support the implementation of the Strategy, both ECE and RWED have increased their financial contributions. ECE will increase financial support to the NWT Arts Council by $50,000, while RWED will provide each Region an additional $10,000, for a total of $50,000, to support the acquisition of traditional materials for arts and fine crafts.

ARTIST OF THE MONTH: BONNY MADSEN



Bonny Madsen



Her work includes pieces such as, "The Discovery" an oil painting of Discovery Mine which hangs in the lobby of City Hall, "Tribute to Gold Mining" her mural in acrylic paints which hangs outside on the Gold "Blessings" "Houseboat on Great Slave Lake" used for the cover of the 2001 City of Yellowknife Annual Report

FEATURE OF THE MONTH: BIRCHBARK BASKETS



For many centuries, Dene women from the Fort Liard area have been using birch bark from local birch trees to make beautiful baskets.

The natural waxes in birchbark make it waterproof and rot resistant. Spruce gum can be put on the seams to seal a basket for carrying water. Clay mixed with dried grass can be applied to the inside of a basket to allow it to be used in a cooking pot. Lids can be added to these versatile baskets to prevent spills and allowing them to be used to store food, carry tools and bark or moss bannocks among many other things.

Late spring or early summer is the best time to harvest birchbark. It is easier to peel when the sap is running and the moisture is just right. A vertical cut about three feet long is made in the tree and a ring of bark is carefully peeled from around the tree. The brown inner bark is left on so the peeling does not cause any harm to the tree.

Roots from the spruce tree are used for sewing birchbark baskets. The end of the root is sharpened to a point for sewing. The roots are placed in water to keep them moist until they are needed.

Red willow branches are used to hold the shape of the basket. The outer layer of the birchbark is gently scraped with a knife to remove the knots and peeling layers of bark. Finally, the birchbark is rubbed with smoldering punk to prevent mold.

The birchbark is then cut into the shape of the basket. If the basket is to be decorated with quillwork, a pattern is drawn on the bark. Then holes are punched with an awl and coloured quills are added one at a time. Another decorative technique involves scraping through the layers of bark. As decorating is completed, sewing the basket is also begun.

The birchbark is dampened with a wet cloth and held over a fire to soften it. When it is softened, an awl is used to punch stitching holes. The birchbark is folded according to the basket pattern and small wooden sticks are inserted in to the holes to hold the shape in the appropriate areas. To make it, a piece of birchbark is cut to the correct shape. A piece of willow is shaped to fit inside the rim of the lid and allowed to dry.

Once the basket and willow strips are dry, the sticks are removed. Seams are sewn with pliable spruce roots, securing the basket in its shape.

Strips of moosehide can be used to add finishing touches to the basket such as handles or to attach a lid.

For more information on birchbark baskets, please visit our website at:

www.gov.nt.ca/RWED/iea/artscrafts.htm

We want to hear from you!



If you hear about any upcoming events or celebrations suited for this newsletter, or if you are a Northern Artist who is interested in being showcased in our Featured Artist section...

Contact us at:

Arts and Fine Crafts Sector Specialist
Investment & Economic Analysis
RWED, GNWT
PO Box 1320
Yellowknife NT X1A 2L9

Ph: (867)920-6130

E-mail :

artsandcraftsnewsletter@gov.nt.ca

Visit our website:

www.gov.nt.ca/RWED/iea/artscrafts.htm

To find out about financial assistance...

Contact your regional office:

RWED	ECE
Deh Cho: (867) 695-7450	Deh Cho: (867) 695-7332
South Slave: (867) 872-6400	South Slave: (867) 872-7212
North Slave: (867) 920-3473	North Slave: (867) 766-5100
Sahtu: (867) 587-4981	Sahtu: (867) 587-2483
Inuvik: (867) 777-7103	Inuvik: (867) 777-7132

GNWT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

This newsletter is created by the Government of the Northwest Territories and is designed to help the NWT Arts community stay up to date with the current "happenings" in the industry.

In the NWT there are two territorial governmental departments — Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development (RWED) and Education Culture and Employment (ECE) that have shared interests in supporting the Arts. ECE aids the creative aspects of the Arts, while RWED's primary role is helping the business side of Arts and Fine crafts. At times, it is difficult to clearly distinguish these roles.

ECE's Role in Supporting NWT Arts

Since 1985, ECE has supported the NWT Arts Council as it strives to stimulate and promote northern Art. The Council's role is to provide recommendations to the Minister of ECE regarding financial awards and workshops. If you would like to apply for funding, please consult the Arts Council website for an application at:

www.pwnhc.learnnet.nt.ca/artscouncil/about.html

ECE also has a Support to Northern Performers' Program designed to aid in the development and promotion of Performing arts and artists in the NWT at local and regional public festivals and events.

Consult the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre website at: www.pwnhc.learnnet.nt.ca/programs/comm.htm

RWED's Role in Supporting NWT Arts

RWED recognizes the importance of tradition and the economic potential of the NWT Arts and Fine Crafts industry. RWED's support is provided through the Business Development Fund and Grants to Small Business program. RWED also supports marketing and promotional efforts nationally and internationally by bringing awareness to the importance and value of traditional Art and Fine Crafts in the NWT.